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T'

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From the Writer's Desk

Hi, folks. Andy here.
I wrote the script for Issue 3 well in advance of September 11, 2001, when the world was changed forever. When the time came to revise the script, I didn't feel there was any way I could feel it was an honest reflection of real life if it didn't at least touch on what had happened. The first story, "Paper Faces on Parade," takes place in late September of 2001, and the events of 9/11 have touched our characters' lives. In particular, Douglas, as someone in the world of finance, has lost colleagues in the attacks, and it has made the death of someone else close to him that much more poignant and painful by its sheer ordinariness in the face of such extraordinary tragedy. The second story, "Steppin' Out," takes place in late October. Our boys can perhaps be excused for wanting to relax a little after all the pain of the previous month.

I hope that this issue finds you all in good health and good circumstances. As we approach the first anniversary of one of the most shocking events of my lifetime, my prayers go out to everyone whose lives were touched and changed, and most especially to the friends and families of the victims. No matter what you feel about what has happened since, I hope that you join me in this wish for their well-being, and for a just and right resolution to the trouble in the world today.

Andy French, June 4, 2002

A Word About Piracy

If you can believe it, someone actually has brought it upon themselves to pirate Circles, Associated Student Bodies, and may of the Radio Comix and Shanda Fantasy Arts titles. This induhvidual (or others) is meticulously scanning each page and posting them to FTP sites on various broadband connections.

Please, don't do this. Pirating small press titles, like Circles, doesn't hurt some huge megalithic corporation's obscenely large bottom line. Pirating our small press titles means that some folks can't pay the rent or eat that week.

Publishing Circles is a labor of love. It costs us upwards of $3,000 to publish one issue with two thousand copies. Diamond Comics buys about half of those issues and pays us about $2 per issue. Thus, for half of the issues we sell, we make fifty cents each in profit. If we sell out of all the other issues we've printed (a miracle in small press terms), we have the potential to make $4,000 profit. And, of course, RABCO dumps that into printing the next issue...

Piracy takes a chunk out of any profits we may be able to make. No profit, no new books. Piracy may have already affected the reprinting of Associated Student Bodies. It looks like the author, Lance Rund, needs to spend the printing money on tracking down a Canadian pirate. There's little we publishers can do to stop piracy, but you can help. If someone offers you a pirated book, just refuse it. Discourage it. Insult the pirate and question his parentage. Information may want to be free, but some of us still need to pay the rent.

Sincerely,
Sean Rabbitt, Chief Bunny

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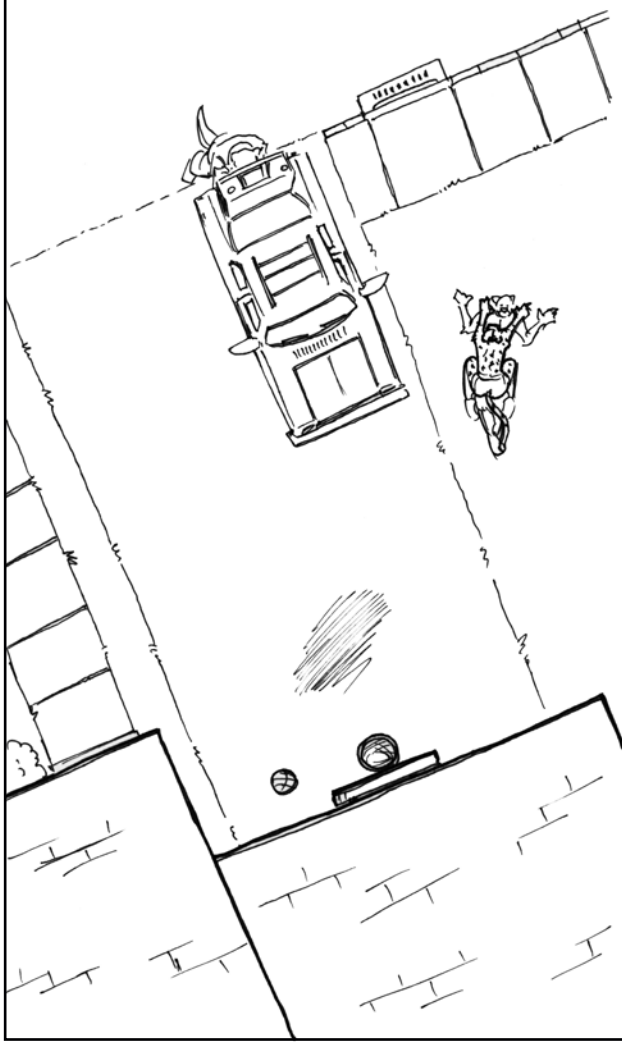


Dear Douglas,

It's that wonderful time of year again. The leaves have changed colors and are starting to fall off the trees, only to be raked up and tossed into garbage bags. Winter will be here soon. Ken and his current beau, Cam, are enjoying the weather while they can. A friend of mine once said something to the tune of "Fall in New England always feels like something is ending." And it does.

This fall, however, also feels like a beginning. Some terrible people have done something crazy, and the whole world seems poised on the verge of something new. I hope it's something good, because it's brought so much pain, especially to you, love. You lost so many colleagues in the madness, and I can see how it's eating at you.

And then, tragically... ironically... to lose someone close to you to something as plebeian as a drunk driver...

I know you cared for Linda, if not exactly in the way she wanted. I don't know what changes that sadness will bring either.

I can smell fires at night, now, as people are stoking up their wood-burning stoves. Lucky sods. Gas heat is fine, but there's something so romantic and cheery about a fireplace. Ah well, life is full of compromises.

Hallowe'en is fast approaching, and everyone's got their plans. Ken, Taye, and Marty are planning to go to a Halloween Costume Dance that's being held at Paradise Island, that new dance club that opened up last winter. It's something of a first date for Marty and Taye, which is so sweet. It makes me think about our first date," and all the craziness that led up to it. Ah, me. But that's the past, and a story you already know so well.

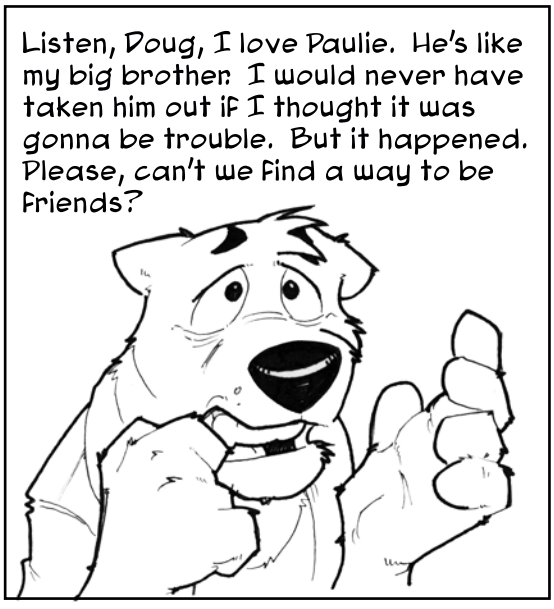
And then there's poor Arthur. You're really so unfair to him, love, and it seems to be getting worse, rather than better. Something's going to come to a head, and soon. Arthur's good at hiding how upset he gets at the way you treat him, but his mask is slipping...

Circles

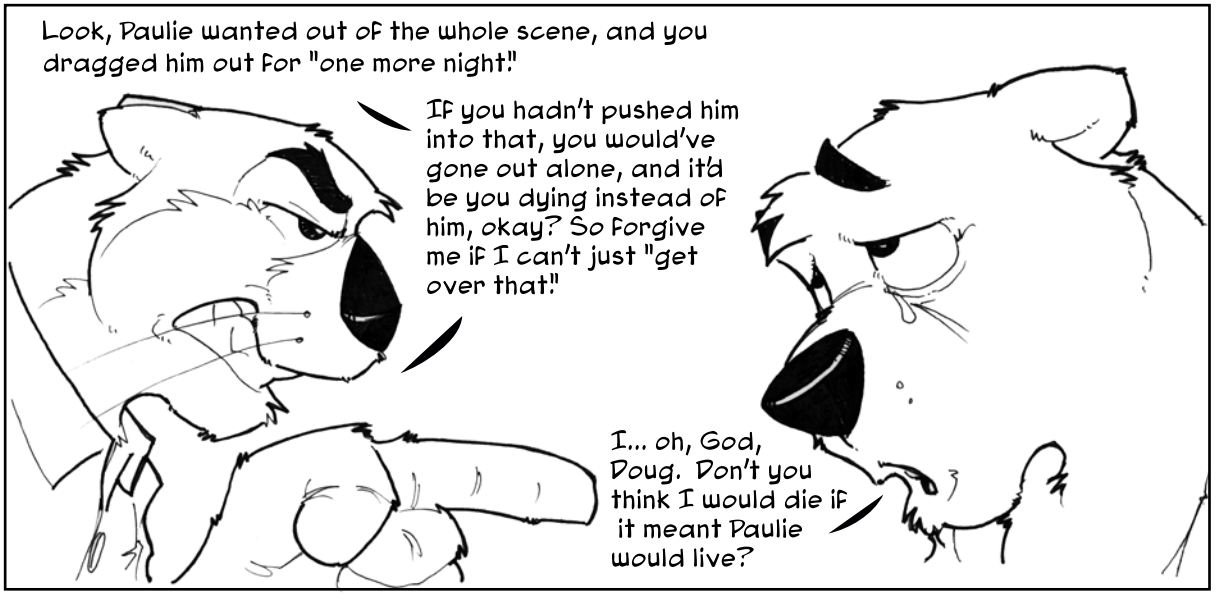
Issue Three, Part One: Paper Faces on Parade

Created by Steve Domanski, Scott Fabianek, and Andrew French.
Script: Andy
Layout: Steve
Pencils & Inks: Scott
Lettering: Sean and Andy
Shading: Steve and Andy
Published by Another RABCO Disaster®, a Rabbit Valley™ Comics Company, Sean Rabbitt, Chief Editor

No, please. Now.
Maybe later, Arthur? These bags are heavy.
Okay, fine. Talk.
Doug, if this past week has taught me anything, it's how uncertain the future is. I want to put this... pain to rest. I know you blame me for what happened to Paulie. If there were any way to change the past, I would. I wish a hundred times a day that I'd been the one that got sick instead of Paulie.
Yeah, well, that makes two of us.
Douglas, I... yeah, okay... it was my fault we got drunk that night and my fault the kid was here. But I didn't tell Paulie to sleep with him. I mean, Jesus, Paulie doesn't blame me. Why do you?
I can't believe I'm even having this friggin' conversation.


Listen, Doug, I love Paulie. He's like my big brother. I would never have taken him out if I thought it was gonna be trouble. But it happened. Please, can't we find a way to be friends?

Can't we find some way to put this whole thing behind us?

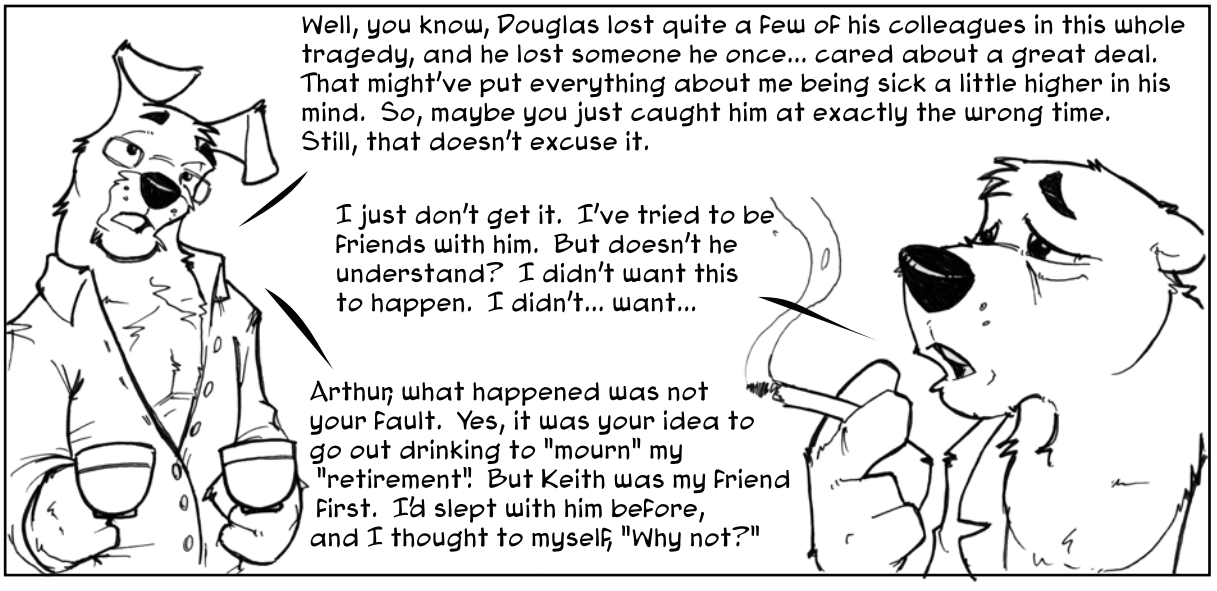

Look, Paulie wanted out of the whole scene, and you dragged him out for "one more night."
If you hadn't pushed him into that, you would've gone out alone, and it'd be you dying instead of him, okay? So forgive me if I can't just "get over that."
I... oh, God, Doug. Don't you think I would die if it meant Paulie would live?

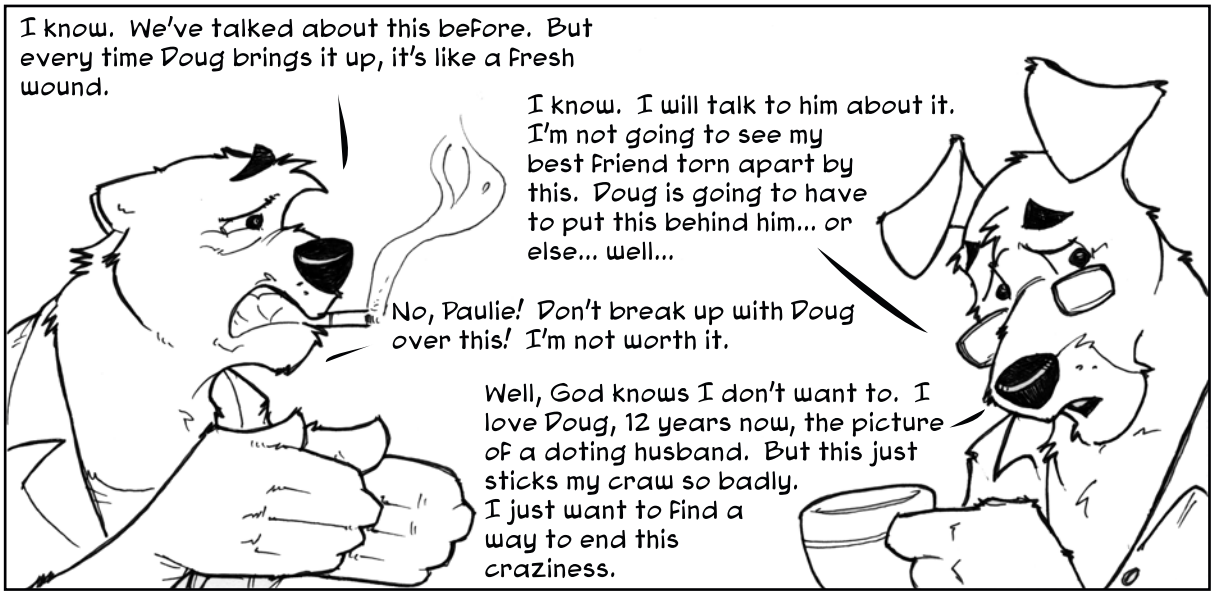
Too bad that you can't, huh? Makes saying things like that easier, though, I bet.

Hey, love, I got some...
Doug, how could you? Those are some of the most hateful things I've ever heard anyone say. Arthur's my oldest friend. I know you blame him, but for the *last* time, it wasn't *his* fault!
It was mine! 100% mine! If you can't get that fact through your head, I...
Well, I just don't know what I'll do!
W-where are you going?
To comfort a friend.

I just can't believe some of the things he said. They were so...

I know, dear. I'm very sorry for that. I know I'm not the one you need the apology from, but...
I just... he's never been that direct and venomous before. Usually there would have been a snide comment, a look... maybe ignoring me totally, but this. Oh, man. It hurt so bad.


Well, you know, Douglas lost quite a few of his colleagues in this whole tragedy, and he lost someone he once... cared about a great deal. That might've put everything about me being sick a little higher in his mind. So, maybe you just caught him at exactly the wrong time. Still, that doesn't excuse it.
I just don't get it. I've tried to be friends with him. But doesn't he understand? I didn't want this to happen. I didn't... want...
Arthur, what happened was not your fault. Yes, it was your idea to go out drinking to "mourn" my "retirement". But Keith was my friend first. I'd slept with him before, and I thought to myself, "Why not?"

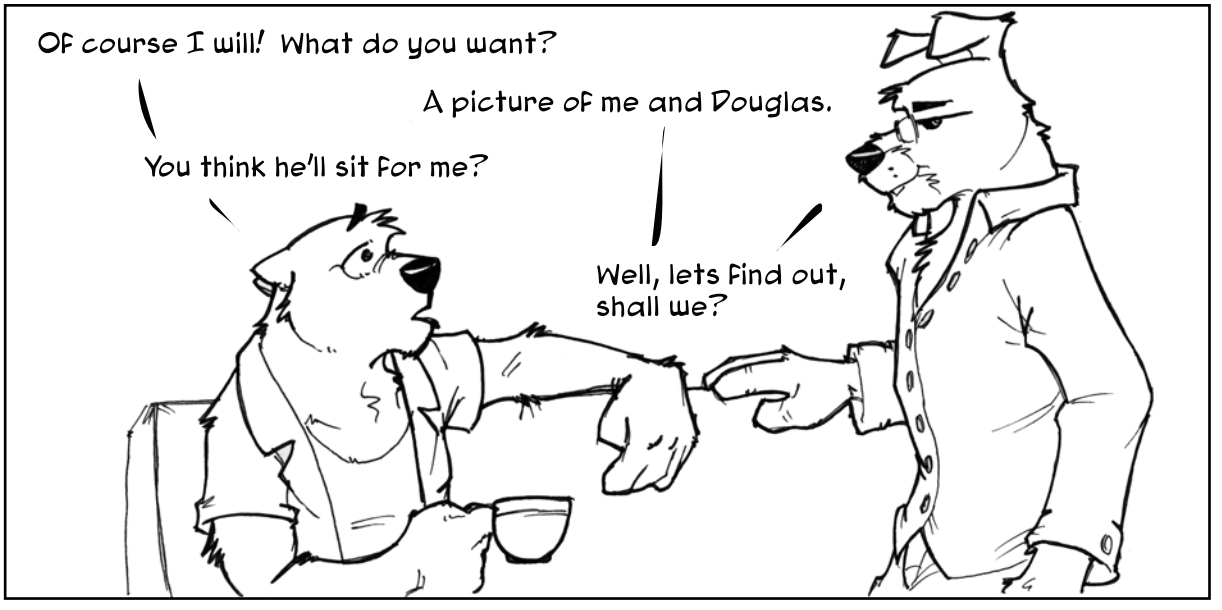

I know. We've talked about this before. But every time Doug brings it up, it's like a fresh wound.
I know. I will talk to him about it. I'm not going to see my best friend torn apart by this. Doug is going to have to put this behind him... or else... well...
No, Paulie! Don't break up with Doug over this! I'm not worth it.
Well, God knows I don't want to. I love Doug, 12 years now, the picture of a doting husband. But this just sticks my craw so badly. I just want to find a way to end this craziness.

I appreciate that, Paulie. I love you, and I like Doug a lot... well, except when he's like what he was just now.
I know, my dear friend, I know.
Hmmm... painting Marty?

Heh, yeah. He's a pretty good subject, even if he is kind of body shy. Kinda wish I'd been the one advertising for a roommate.
Well, you're so good at getting your subjects to relax.
Hmmm..

What is it?

I just had a thought. Will you paint something for me?

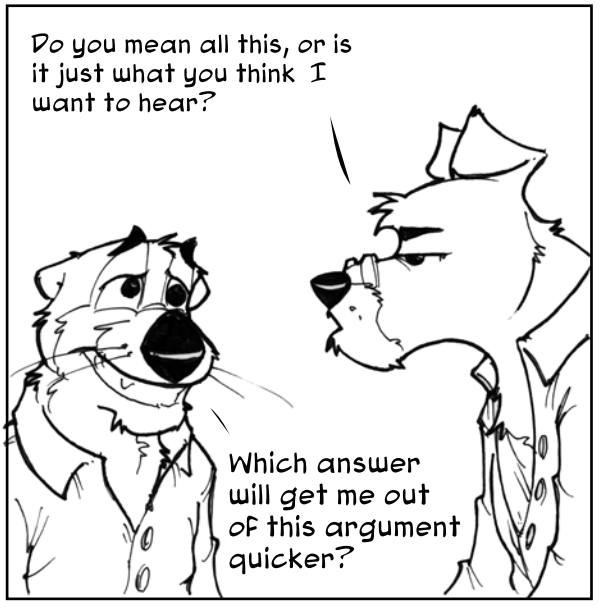

Of course I will! What do you want?
A picture of me and Douglas.
You think he'll sit for me?
Well, lets find out, shall we?

You hurt him badly, you know. I hate it when you treat him like that.
I know. I'm really sorry, Paulie. I should really go and apologize.

It's just... every time I see him, I remember how you got sick, and...

No, you don't.
Beg pardon?
You don't "remember" what happened. You weren't there. You remember my stories.
Okay, right. I remember what you've told me.
Then how is it you never remember that I've told you it wasn't Arthur's fault?

I guess I feel like I can't blame you. You're my perfect guy, after all. Arthur... Yeah, ok, I know it isn't Arthur's fault. I've been thinking about it a lot. I just get so angry, and then I lash out.
Arthur's just an easy target more often than not.


Do you mean all this, or is it just what you think I want to hear?
Which answer will get me out of this argument quicker?

Okay, truth is I just don't know, Paulie. I still feel a lot of anger, and I do blame Arthur, in part, but I'm willing to try and put it behind us.

When you started going downstairs, I thought you were just going to walk out the door, and I realized I'd gone too far. I was way out of line. I was so scared I was going to lose you, and I... I don't think I could take losing anything else right now. So, yeah, I did some serious thinking.

Think he'd accept an apology, if I went down?

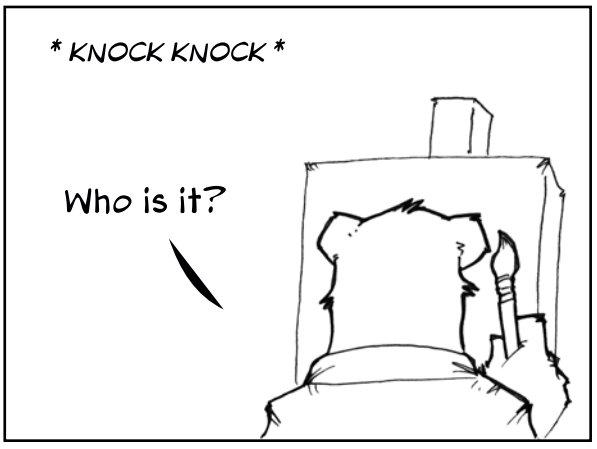
I suspect he might. He's always been a big proponent of forgive and forget.

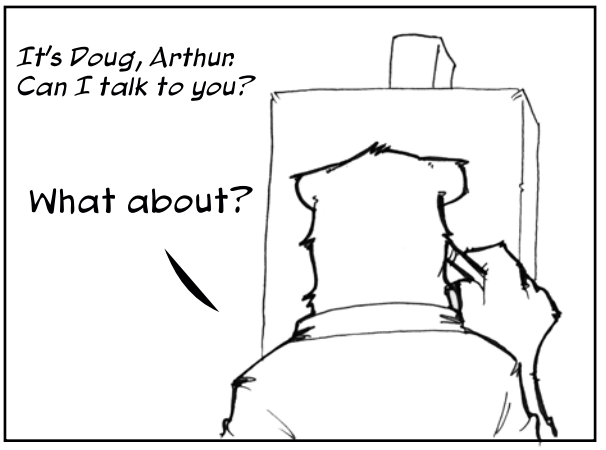
Well, maybe he can give me a few lessons on that.

I love you, very much, you know.

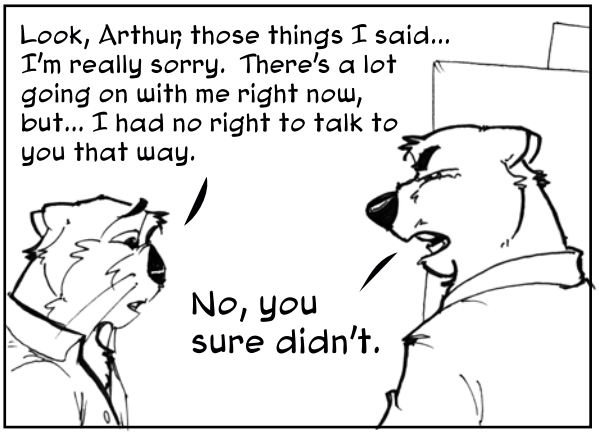
Well, I don't know what I did to deserve it, but I'm glad.

And it so happens that I love you too...


* KNOCK KNOCK *
Who is it?


It's Doug, Arthur. Can I talk to you?
What about?

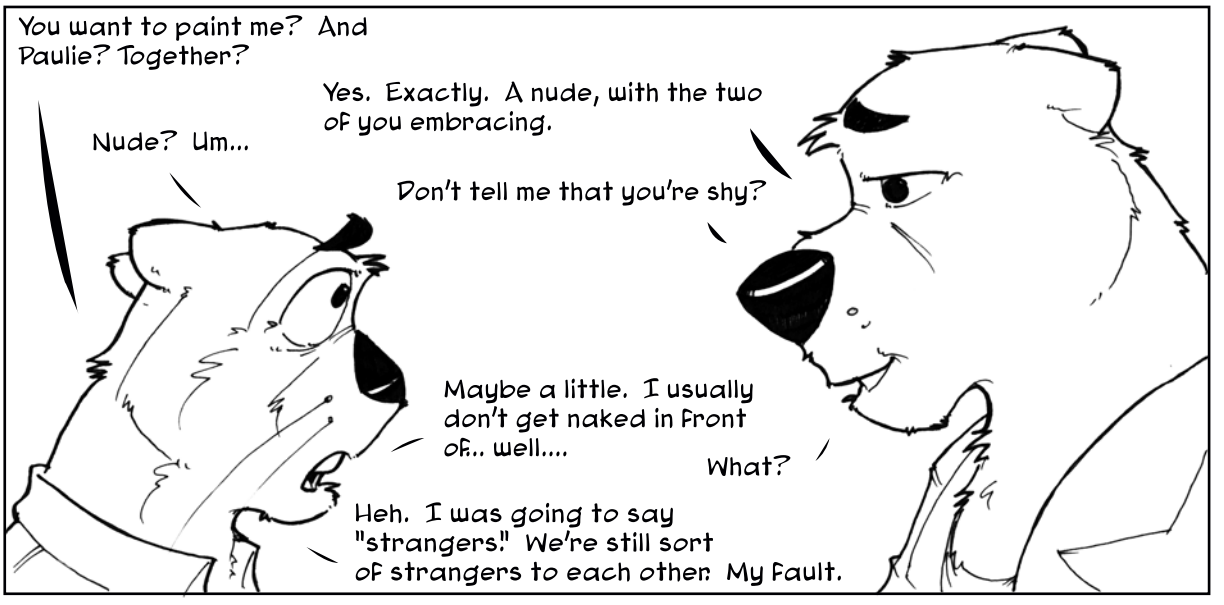
I came to apologize. I'm really... really sorry for what I said.
Okay, come on down.


Look, Arthur, those things I said... I'm really sorry. There's a lot going on with me right now, but... I had no right to talk to you that way.
No, you sure didn't.

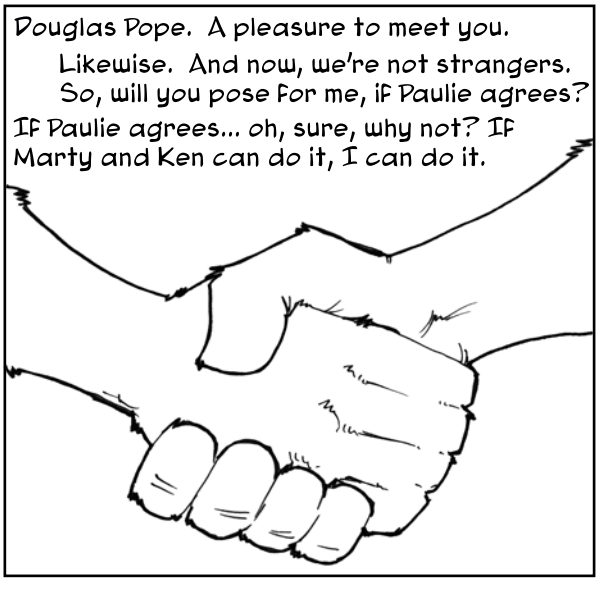
I know you care about Paulie a lot, and I know it wasn't really your fault... what happened. I'm sorry I've been treating you like that. If you're still willing, I like to try to put the whole thing... well, everything behind us.
I'm willing to give it a shot. You think you can do it?

Yeah, I think I can. And, if there's anything I can do to make up to you for what I said, earlier... well, really... just name it and I'll do it.
Well, no. I don't want to put it on those terms.
But there is something...

Sure. Ask.
Well, you know that portrait I did of Paulie, way back when? I've wanted to do a more modern follow up. But...
I can't imagine painting Paulie without you. If Paulie's ok with it, would you pose for me?


You want to paint me? And Paulie? Together?
Yes. Exactly. A nude, with the two of you embracing.
Nude? Um...
Don't tell me that you're shy?
Maybe a little. I usually don't get naked in front of... well....
What?
Heh. I was going to say "strangers." We're still sort of strangers to each other. My fault.

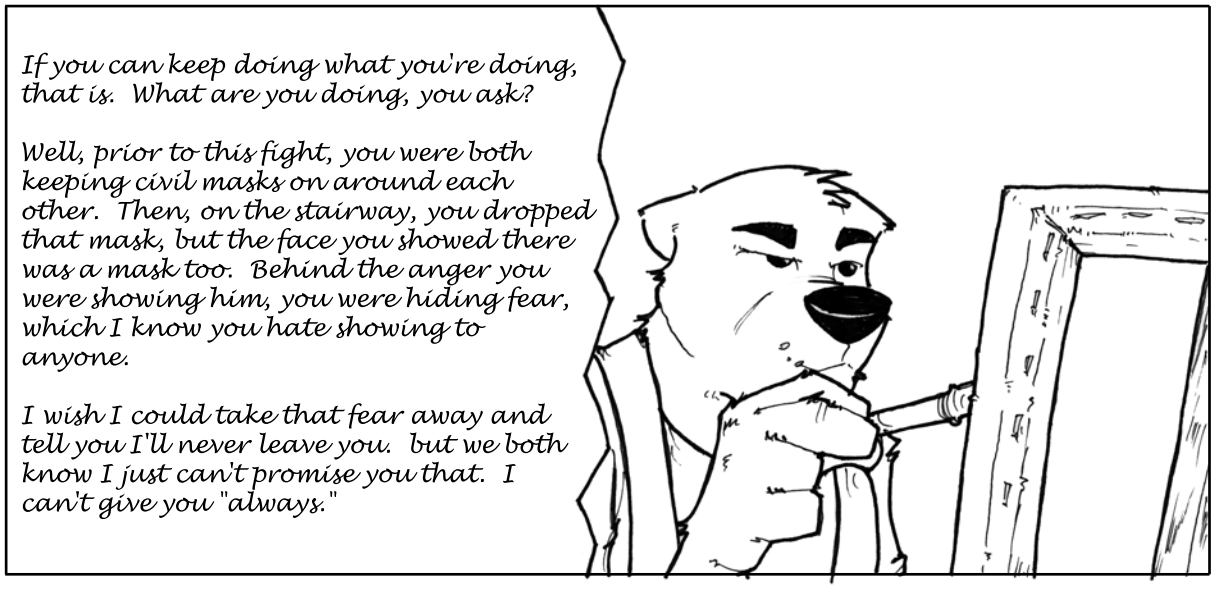
Hey, Forgive and Forget, remember?
Hello. I'm Arthur Korsky.


Douglas Pope. A pleasure to meet you.
Likewise. And now, we're not strangers. So, will you pose for me, if Paulie agrees?
If Paulie agrees... oh, sure, why not? If Marty and Ken can do it, I can do it.

Cool. I'll have to get some more paint, but we can start tomorrow evening, if you guys are willing.
You know... I really am sorry. We could have been good friends by now, if I hadn't...

Forgive and Forget, Doug. No regrets. There's still plenty of time to be friends, right?
Right. So let's go ask Paulie.

Dear Douglas,
I'm pleased to see that tensions are being eased off between you & Arthur. As time goes by, I think you're both going to find that you have a lot in common, & I think a good friendship can grow.


If you can keep doing what you're doing, that is. What are you doing, you ask?
Well, prior to this fight, you were both keeping civil masks on around each other. Then, on the stairway, you dropped that mask, but the face you showed there was a mask too. Behind the anger you were showing him, you were hiding fear, which I know you hate showing to anyone.
I wish I could take that fear away and tell you I'll never leave you. but we both know I just can't promise you that. I can't give you "always."

I can only give you "as long as I can." And that's just another mask you and I both wear, pretending it doesn't bother either of us.
For now, anyway, you and Arthur have taken off your masks. I must applaud you both for that, and I hope that you keep them off for good.
I hope you know that, no matter what happens, I will love you always.
Love,
Paulie

One month later ...

Dear Douglas,

Well, the big night is here. Samhain. All Hallow's Eve.

Call it what you will, it's Hallowe'en.

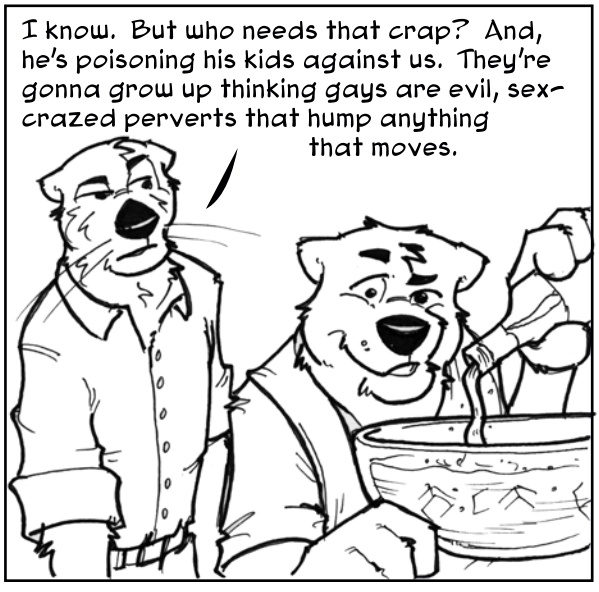
Issue Three, Part Two: Steppin' Out

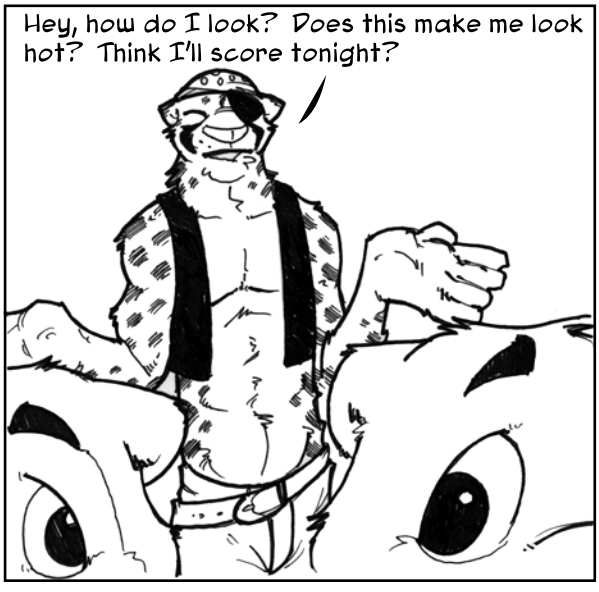
Our neighborhood gremlins are arriving in droves. Probably because they know from experience that Taye insists we spring for full-sized candy bars, rather than snack packs. Thank God for Costco ...

Hallowe'en has always been a favorite of mine. I love seeing all the decorations, the costumes, and the silly, scary movies on T.V. And, your pumpkin soup recipe is to die for!

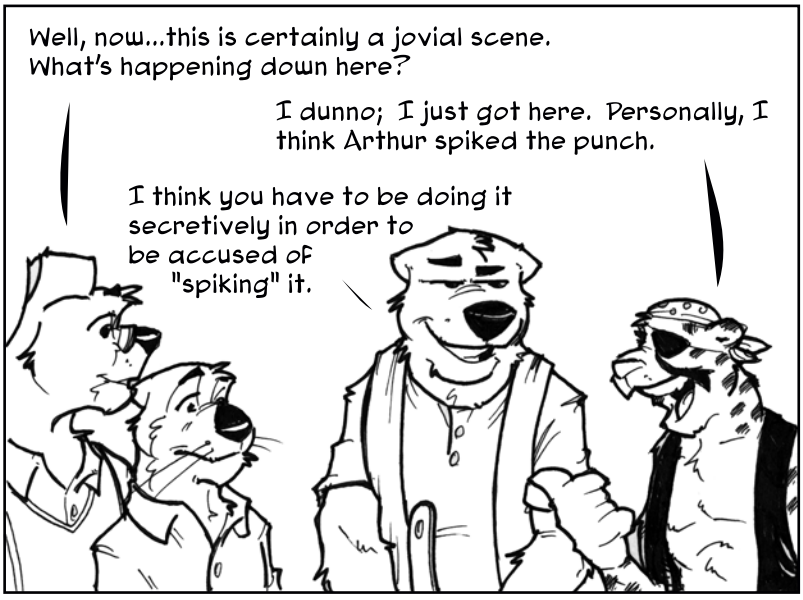
Tonight's also a big night for Taye & Marty. who are going on the official "first date." They and Ken are going to boogie the night away... or whatever "boogie" has been replaced with now.

You know who just "dropped by?" Carter Allen. Would you believe he won't even let his kids trick-or-treat here? Man! Sometimes I think he's trying to piss me off..
Probably thinks we're injecting our Snickers bars with special chemicals that turn kids gay, or something.
Still, what can you do? Some folks just don't like us. If he's that much of a butt-head, who wants him around, frankly?


I know. But who needs that crap? And, he's poisoning his kids against us. They're gonna grow up thinking gays are evil, sex-crazed perverts that hump anything that moves.


Hey, how do I look? Does this make me look hot? Think I'll score tonight?

What? Why are you guys smirking? Do I look stupid?
Oh... heh... no, Ken. We were just amused by the universe's sense of timing.


Well, now...this is certainly a jovial scene. What's happening down here?
I dunno; I just got here. Personally, I think Arthur spiked the punch.
I think you have to be doing it secretively in order to be accused of "spiking" it.

Hiya.
Hi Marty. You look good. Ready for the big dance?
I guess so. I'm not much of a dancer.
Heh, you and me both. But Paulie & John still used to drag me out. Just think of it as an adventure.
Adventure. Excitement. A Jedi craves not these things.
How about a Snickers?
Um... that we crave.
You look wonderful, dear. Very much like a real Jedi.
Plus a few pounds.
Judge me not by my size.
Well, your Jedi-ness, is your date ready yet?
Well, he wouldn't put on his costume until I left the bedroom.
It shouldn't take long.
Yoo-hoo!
Angel First-Class Taylor Dooley, reporting for duty.

Wow... You look great, Taye.
Thank you, Master Jedi.

We should probably get going. The T is gonna be crowded tonight.
Have fun, children. Don't do anything we wouldn't do.
Sure you don't wanna come?

Not tonight, dear. We're going to finish up giving out candy, and then Douglas & I are sitting for Arthur again.

Oh, yeah! The painting! How's that going, Arthur?
Well, I don't want to jinx it, but... it's a masterpiece!
Hmph! He won't even let us see it!

This is gonna be great. After the last couple of months, we all deserve a good party. Ready, Marty?
Oh, as ready as I'll ever be, I expect.

So... explain again why we shouldn't be worried that I'm not 21 yet?
Because we know people!

Look, this club is 18 years and up. If you're underage, you just wear a wristband and they won't let you buy drinks. The owner, Joe, had an 18-year old boyfriend when they opened, so he arranged it like that.
Oh... okay... that does make sense.

Heh... you should tell him who the 18-year old was!
?
Oh, shut up, Ken.

We're here!
PARADISE
Wow!

Hey, handsome.
Yo, Marc.

Well, hey, Taye. Who's your friend?
This is Marty, my new... roommate. Marty, this is Marc. He's a doorman here.

whisper; whisper
Oh, sure.
There. Welcome to Paradise.
Thanks. Sorry for the trouble.
No trouble at all. You guys go right in.
Um, so, there were like a billion people in that line.
Yup.
And we got to just walk past them.
Yup.
And this is because...
I know people.
Right.
Is this a party or what?
A party? This is Sodom and Gomorrah, the Rowdy Years! This is amazing! It's beautiful!

Knew you'd like it! There's a couple of folks you've got to meet.
Well, I've got to catch up with somebody. I'll see you guys later!
Have fun, Ken!
Stick with me, kiddo! Such sights I have to show you...
Don't let go of me, please. I'm feeling a little overwhelmed.
What?!
I said, I'm feeling overwhelmed!
Perfectly understandable!
Wow! Ken's fast, huh?
What do you mean?
He's already talking to someone.
Yup! He's fast! Oh, I see Jesús over there! You've got to meet him!
Hello, Taye!
Roger? What the fuck are you doing here?
It's a free country, isn't it?

What do you want, Roger?
Heard you were here! Wanted to say hi! So, who's this?
Hi! I'm Marty, Taye's roommate!

Get lost, Roger! We have nothing to say to each other!
This is your new roommate? Should I be offended or amused?
You should be going, Asshole! C'mon, Marty!

I'm sorry, Marty! That was Roger, my ex-boyfriend!
Easy to see what I saw in him, huh?

Well... it's easier to see what he saw in you.
You charmer! C'mon. Let's dance!

pant, pant Oh, my God! I can't believe how out of shape I am!
Looked good to me, my brave Jedi knight!
Oh! There's Jesús! Quick! This way!

He's so wonderful! You've got to meet him. Jesús! Jesús!

Taye, querido! It's so good to see you! And this must be Marty, no?
It's a pleasure to meet you.

Oh, Chica! I like this one! Where can I get one?
Can't have this one! He's Mine!

You selfish bitch! Well, can I at least borrow him?
Only til I get back with some drinks.

That's a really awesome costume, Jesús!
Costume? No, no, hermoso! This mask is my costume!
Oh! Gee, I've never met a...um...
Choose your words carefully, Hermoso!
Um...drag queen?
Good choice of words. You may live.
I've just never met one before.
Heh. You're sweet, Marty. Much nicer than some guys my friends have dated.
Thanks. At least I've gotta be better than that Roger guy of Taye's, huh?
Oh, you think so, you Fat Fucker?

Roger!!
Roger, chico, don't you do anything stupid! You know Joe won't stand for any fighting in here!
Who's fighting? Why don't you just stay out of this, Jesús? This has nothing to do with you!
It's cool, Jesús! Nothing's gonna happen, right, Roger?

I can't believe he threw me out for you!
What? What're you talking about?
I'm out of the picture, and he brings you in! Tell me, did you two fuck the first night after I was gone, or what?
Dude, you're not making sense!
Playing stupid, eh? Think I'll care? I'll tear you apart, you little shit!

I don't think so, asshole!
What the fuck do you think you're doing Roger?

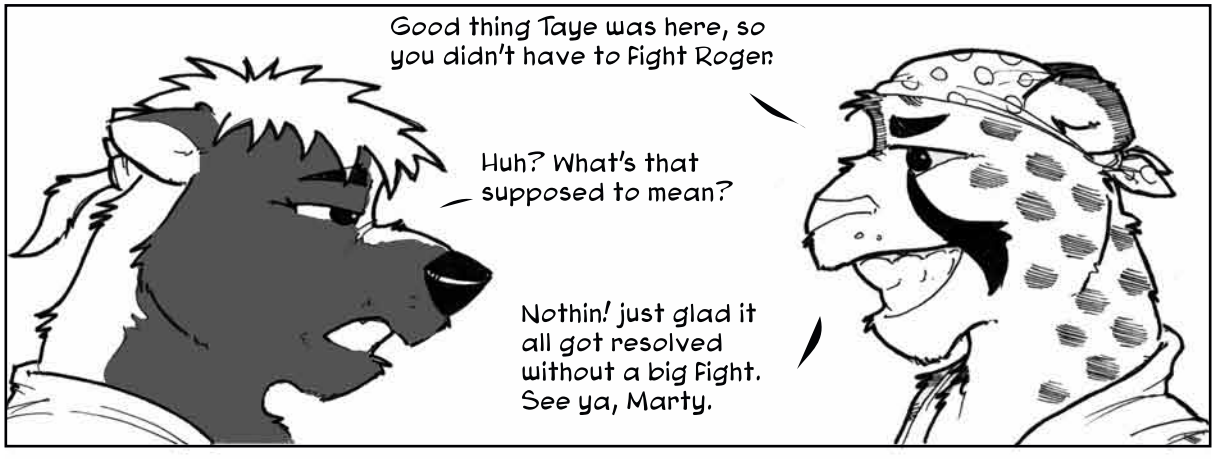
Stay out of it, Taye! I'm gonna flatten this little cupcake!

SWISH!

SMACK!

I broke up with you, asshole, because of shit like this! You stupid bully!
I'm warning you, Roger! Stay away from me and my friends!
What the HELL is goin' on over here?
He started it!
Taye... Jeez, man! What did you do that for? You know I'm gonna have to ask ya t'leave!
Oh, come on, Marc! Taye may have landed the first punch, but he didn't throw the first!
That's okay, Jesús... we'll go, Marc. I've had enough partying for one night.
Yeah... I'm good.
I'm just gonna get some ice for my hand, okay?
Sure. Just ask at the bar.
C'mon, handsome. We'll get the coats.
That fucking slut! I should...
You should go home and sober up!
Oh, and by the way, you can stay out of our club for a while! If I see you around here, especially on a night Taye shows up, I'll bounce your ass!

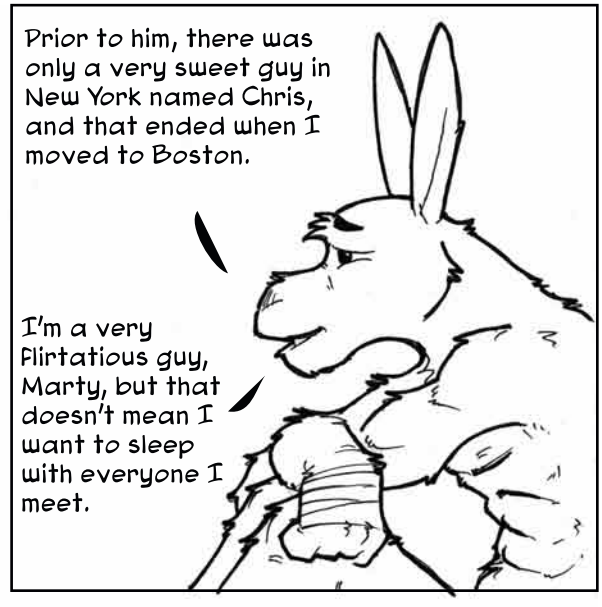
Sorry about the early night for you guys. I'm gonna stay a bit longer. Could you tell everyone?
Sure, Ken.


Good thing Taye was here, so you didn't have to fight Roger.
Huh? What's that supposed to mean?
Nothin! just glad it all got resolved without a big fight. See ya, Marty.

Sorry you have to go so early, chica.
We'll come back on a less crazy night, I promise.
You'd better, hermana. And you call me soon, okay? And Marty? It's been a real pleasure.
Likewise, Jesús.

Sheesh. One slap and I sprain my wrist. Am I a wuss or what?
Well, you didn't look too wussy when you were decking that jerk.
Well, I had to defend the honor of my snuggly guy, didn't I?
I guess.
Hey! What's wrong?
Well, I've got all these questions, now...
Such as?
Well... For starters, who was the 18-year old? You know... the club-owner's boyfriend? You hushed Ken up about it...
Hee! You thought that was me?
Well... you are the guy who "knows people."
Well, yeah. I make friends easily. I didn't mean in the biblical sense.
Well, who was it, then?
It was Ken. Joe was his first boyfriend.

Well... okay... can I sum up the rest of my worries in two questions?
Sure.
Of the people we met tonight, how many have you slept with?
One. Roger.
Only Roger?


Prior to him, there was only a very sweet guy in New York named Chris, and that ended when I moved to Boston.
I'm a very flirtatious guy, Marty, but that doesn't mean I want to sleep with everyone I meet.

Okay, second question. What are we to each other? Tonight, you were introducing me as your roommate...

Oh, I'm not wild about labels, hon, but if you like, I'll call you my boyfriend. I mean, we can't use "lover" or "partner" yet, technically... and "significant other" sounds like something you check on a form...
Partner sounds like we're going into business together...

Actually, I really like it when you call me Teddy Bear.
Mmmmm... I like calling you that, too. Could be much worse. Chris used to call me Love Wumps.
And... ummm... I was thinking... this is our first date...

Of all the touches we have shared, and may yet share, there will never be another one quite like our First Kiss. In the instant in which our lips met for the first time, my heart paused, for just a moment, in its steady beating, as if to acknowledge the power of a force which is both bigger than itself and, suddenly, more imperative to my survival than even the flowing of my blood. In that instant, I realized how much I had come to love you, and I smiled, inwardly, at the revelation that I now knew the person I wanted to spend the rest of my life with. I wanted to keep on kissing you, holding you, standing beside you, and loving you, until the day I died, and I knew that, on that day, my ghost would wait, patiently, on the other side, until you were there. Because I now knew that no life or afterlife could be Paradise unless you were there.

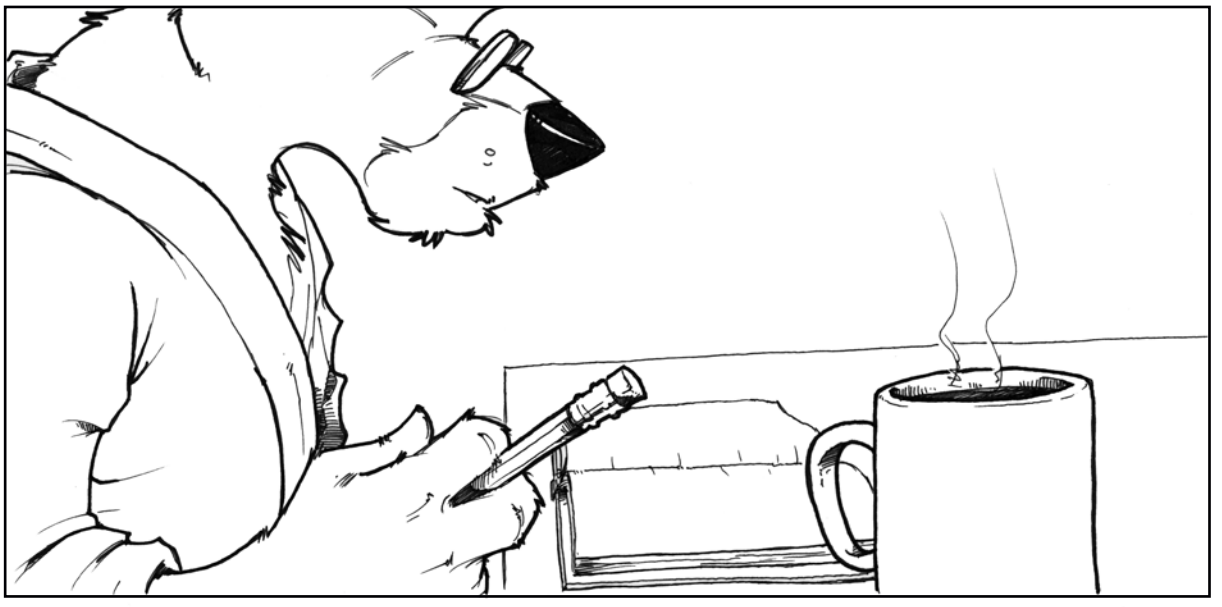
sigh That was pretty nice.
That was worth the wait!
Want to do some more?
You're ready for more?

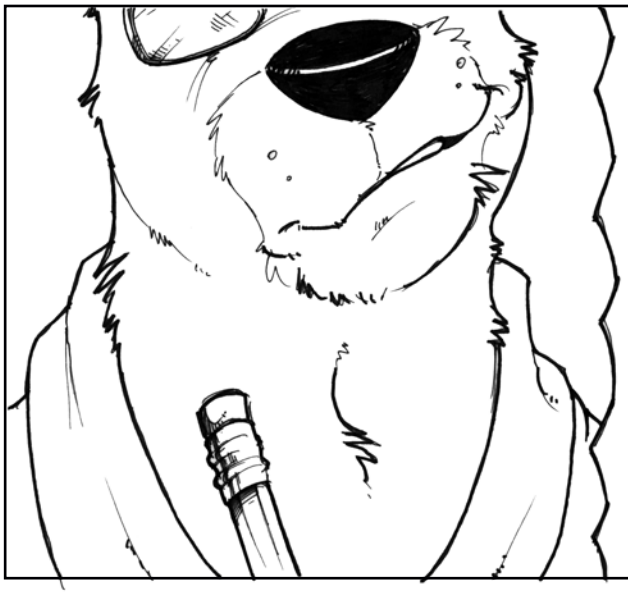
I meant more kissing.
Oh... heh... sorry.

There's no rush, Marty. When you're ready, I'll be here. I'd rather take it slow and go all the way when you're ready.
Til then, we can practice our kissing.

Thanks, Taye. I'm still a little leery, but... I think about it a lot.
When we do it, it'll be my first time for a lot of stuff. I'm glad it'll be with you.

Love wumps.
Hee!





Dear Douglas,

The night for masks ends.
Costumes are stored 'til next year.
We still have candy.

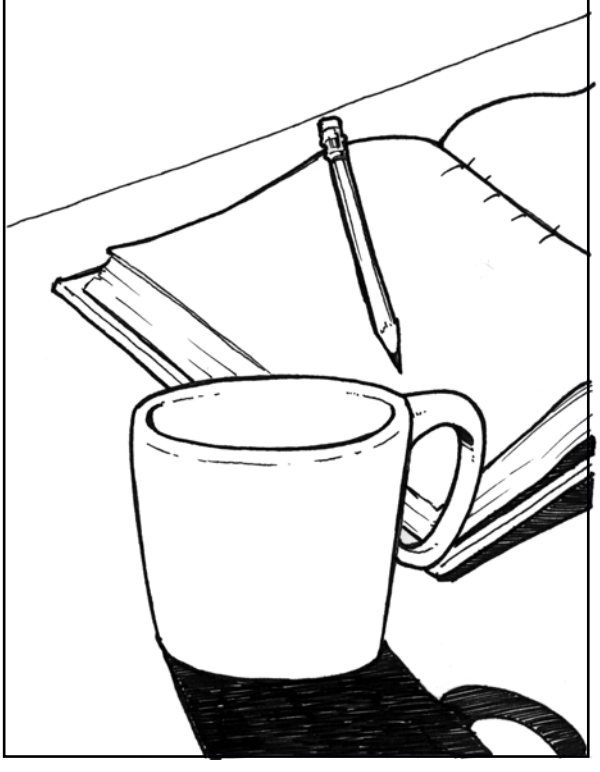
That was my Hallowe'en haiku.

I just got in from my gardening, but I didn't get much done. Someone had festooned our yard with toilet paper, so I spent most of the morning cleaning it up.

The trouble is, I have to wonder if they did it as a simple prank, or if we were singled out because we're gay. I hate having to wonder about things like that.

I gather that Mary and Taye had an eventful evening last night from what Marty told me before heading off to school. From the fact that Ken hasn't come home yet, I'd say the same is true of him.

And, as if I needed this, just as I'm getting things between you and Arthur somewhat settled, it would seem that Ken is up to something regarding Marty and Taye. I hope that can be settled amicably, and soon.



I'm really getting too old for this sort of thing. Really.

All in all, though, these last couple of weeks have made me think about things. About how people use and wear masks.

Some people, like Marty, have none. The Marty I see inside is the same Marty I see on the surface.

Ken, on the other hand... I feel like there are depths to Ken that he won't let any of us see.

On the other hand, who am I to talk? The only way I can get through a day, sometimes, is to put on my happy mask and joke my way towards my final days.

I hope this isn't too depressing for you, my love. Please believe me when I say you make those days rare indeed for me.

Anyway, closing for now. There is always so much to be doing around here. Idle rich, indeed.

Love,
Paulie

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6 kinsey circle

letters to the boys

Hi, folks. Andy here. The response to Issues 1 & 2 has been great. Thank you all so much for your support, through your letters, E-mail, and postings to our news groups. As reminder, you can send letters to the Rabbit Valley address, E-mail to paulie@rabco.org, and you can join our Yahoo Group at http://www.yahoogroups.com/group/circles-comic Let's take some letters!

Hi there!

I had been so pleased with Circles #1 that I was a little nervous when #2 finally arrived at my local comic store. Would it live up to the high expectations I had for it? Would I still empathize with the characters as much as I had in #1?

My short answer: Wow!! There are so many things to rave about in this issue that I don't want my letter to get repetitive, so I'll just cover a few things that particularly tickled my fancy:

- First, in place of honor, is the slowly growing relationship between Marty and Taye. This was handled very gracefully, and since I've been where Marty is myself, I really found myself drawn in to his desire to "go slow." The artwork of the two of them together in bed was very expressive – facial expressions and body posture communicate where they both are so clearly! From Taye's satisfied smile with his arm around Marty to his devilish smile as he revealed to Marty his bribing of Arthur about the bed, the artists here have shown a great ability to communicate different emotions.

By the way, when Marty finally explodes at his grandmother and admits he's attracted to Taye, it was funny to see Taye's reaction in the next panel. Was he blushing? It seems like he was, which is funny given his comments about Marty's blushing in issue #1.

- The relationship between Douglas and Mrs. Nussbaum had me in stitches. Obviously they are good friends, and just as obviously neither one is willing to give the other an inch. You guys captured this wonderfully well in both of their facial expressions throughout her visit.

Not too much on the downside in this issue, with the possible exception of Ken. You guys are really showing him as a callow, shallow airhead, and it would be nice to believe that there are some depths somewhere in him. One hint about this is his reaction to Marty's reconciliation with his folks. He has the oddest half-smile on his face... makes me wonder what Ken's relationship with his own parents might be.

Anyway, to wrap up, my congratulations and gratitude for #2 and for the whole comic, and here's to many, many more to come!

Westwind

Hi, Westwind. Sorry I had to edit your letter for purposes of space. We're very pleased you enjoyed the comic so much. Taye is, indeed, blushing, and it was meant to be ironic. Douglas and Mrs. Nussbaum adore each other. The Ken issue has probably hit its head with Issue 3. See the next issue blurb for more about Ken.

Hello. I wanted to add my voice to that of all the people telling you what a terrific series you've created. I've just read issue 2 (I get my comics late), and I enjoyed it even more than the first one. I also wanted to tell you that I've written a review of your series on my site, **http://gaycomicslist.free.fr**, which I'm using to review various gay comics. I've already reviewed ASB, and I've put links to Rabbit Valley. I hope some people who'll read my review will decide to buy your series. I wish everybody involved the best of luck for their work on Circles and on anything else by them I might have the pleasure to read.

Yours,
François

Thanks, François. The review is really very flattering, and we appreciate the exposure. Nice to know that our comic is making it over the Atlantic.

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6 kinsey circle

letters to the boys

Dear Andy (cause I know you hate for me to call you Mr. French),

I just got issue 2 today. I feel I must, of course, write and say I loved it. Naturally, that goes without saying. Great art, great writing, what is not to love? You did another wonderful job with this issue. As a major fan of comic books, I feel this is one of the best comics I have read of any kind. (Hmmm, that sounds over the top, but I feel it is the truth.) This may sound silly, but I liked the cover's logo. (I love green.)

I would have gotten Issue 2 sooner but the oddest things kept happening: two computer crashes, a blown out Ethernet card, and more. Well, everything is finally straightened out and getting back to semi normalcy (or what passes for that around here).

Arthur looks great! This entire issue, Arthur's few appearances have been wonderful. His face looks great as does Arthur in general. Mr. Fabianek did a great job this issue with him I hope he will draw Arthur to this level of excellence for the rest of the series!

I hope I don't sound insulting, but what is with Ken acting with zero social tact? I mean he seems like an intelligent person, even likeable, but he keeps saying stuff that can only be called a social faux pas every time. I hate to ask, but is there a larger story behind this?

Marty's entire coming out was wonderful. It's nice to see this type of coming out instead of the entire parents' kicking out hating hype the media loves spreading around.... I loved it. The fact that his parent's had a bet about this was just to funny for words. Is it just me or is Marty's father more annoyed that he lost the bet then anything else? All around I loved this part especially Marty's reaction to everything.... That last kiss on page 31 is very nice and very adorable. Is every issue going to end with a kiss between those two? (I hope so; they are just a great couple.)

I just want to say again this is wonderful work. I love comic books and I can tell that this is some great stuff. I love the layout, the art, and the writing. You three, to repeat a phrase, "Rock!" Can't wait for issue 3!

Hope the production of issue 3 is less eventful,
Daniel Fahl

P.S.: A funny quote form one of my professors: "I can understand the works of Chaucer but I still am having trouble comprehending comic books."

Sorry I edited so much out of your letter, Daniel. Glad you're having such a good time. There is, indeed, something going on with our resident cheetah. This issue may have thrown some light on things... or does it raise more questions?

Dear Andy (and RABCO),

Thanks for sending out the comics so quickly; RABCO has incredible service. Also, more importantly, "Circles" is some of the best storytelling I've ever read. I've never known such depth and complexity of character development to be conveyed by only two issues. I feel like I've known these "people" for years. I can hardly wait for the next issue, but I can wait for the level of quality in a work like this. The art, the story...it is a standard that ANYTHING I read in the future will need to live up to.

Sincerely,
Tim Johnson

Thank you, Tim. We're glad that you hold the comic in such high regard. One of the things we said when we started out was, "We don't want this to be JUST a furry comic." In other words, we wanted people who were not into the furry fandom to be able to pick up Circles and enjoy it. Thank you for suggesting that we succeeded.

6 kinsey circle

letters to the boys

Hey! I just really wanted to let you all know that Circles is great! It's well written, and well illustrated, and very entertaining! It's very refreshing to have a comic about gay life that's just so, well, "life-ish." Reading about Marty and his adjustment to Kinsey Circle, Taye, his family was comforting to some extent. My parents recently found out about me, and it's nice to read about life someone else going through the same stuff, around the same age as myself, too.

The rest of the characters also are quite memorable. Taye's great with his line, "Ohmigod! I can't believe you're blushing. That's so cute! I didn't think anyone blushed anymore." EX-cellent line!.

Alright, so if you can't tell by now, I'm a bit excited over the series thus far (as well as seeming to have misplaced my thesaurus, so have resorted to using the word "great" over and over. Have I mentioned Circles is great? Um, so in an inspired moment (more on that in a bit), I created a piece (which I've attached to the E-mail) inspired by Circles – specifically, Marty (skunk after my own heart....) The fact that Marty's doesn't have the "perfect" body and that Taye still finds him cute is an excellent message. People really should learn to love themselves, and hopefully, Marty's on his way to that!

Everyone deserves praise for things well done. In all seriousness, you all have created something wonderful. I'm earnestly and eagerly awaiting Issue #3!

Later!
-A-

P. S.. Maudlin - great word!

Thank you, -A-. Maudlin is, indeed, a wonderful word. I recommend trying to use it at least twice, daily. ;)

I have to admit the only reason I was ever interested in Circles is because I missed Scott's artwork so much. I have to say I'm glad I did, otherwise I would have missed out on a great comic. I just received issue 2 today from RABCO and read it front to back the second I got home. I love it! Love, love, love! I just ordered the 1st issue a few minutes ago (did that kinda backwards, but it works) and eagerly await issue 3.

Marty's life hit real close to home for me, as I'm sure it does for a lot of people, and this issue helped change my outlook on coming out to my parents... It still seems like the scariest thing in the world right now, but you've given me hope. Thank you for making me smile, making me laugh, making me nervous, giving me something to think about, and making all your characters so damn sexy. :)

I wish you guys the best of luck with Circles and hope you keep them coming for a long time.

Ryan

Thanks, Ryan. If Circles helps even one person deal with the difficulties of life as a homosexual, I will feel we have succeeded.

Hey people,

How is everyone doing? I have read both Circles #1 and #2 and have throughly enjoyed them. I live in practically nowhere, and nothing happens. It is nice to read something like Circles and get a feel of something interesting happening.

Marty, I would have to say, is my favorite. He is sweet, kind, and caring. With the exeption of the weight, I can pretty much relate to his character. I would love to have met someone like Taye. He is a good guy and seems to help people relax around him. I love the way he gets reactions from Marty. Douglas well, he kinda scares me abit. It almost seems like if he doesn't like something then the person is history. I think I'll just hide behind Paulie while he is around. Paulie I like alot. He

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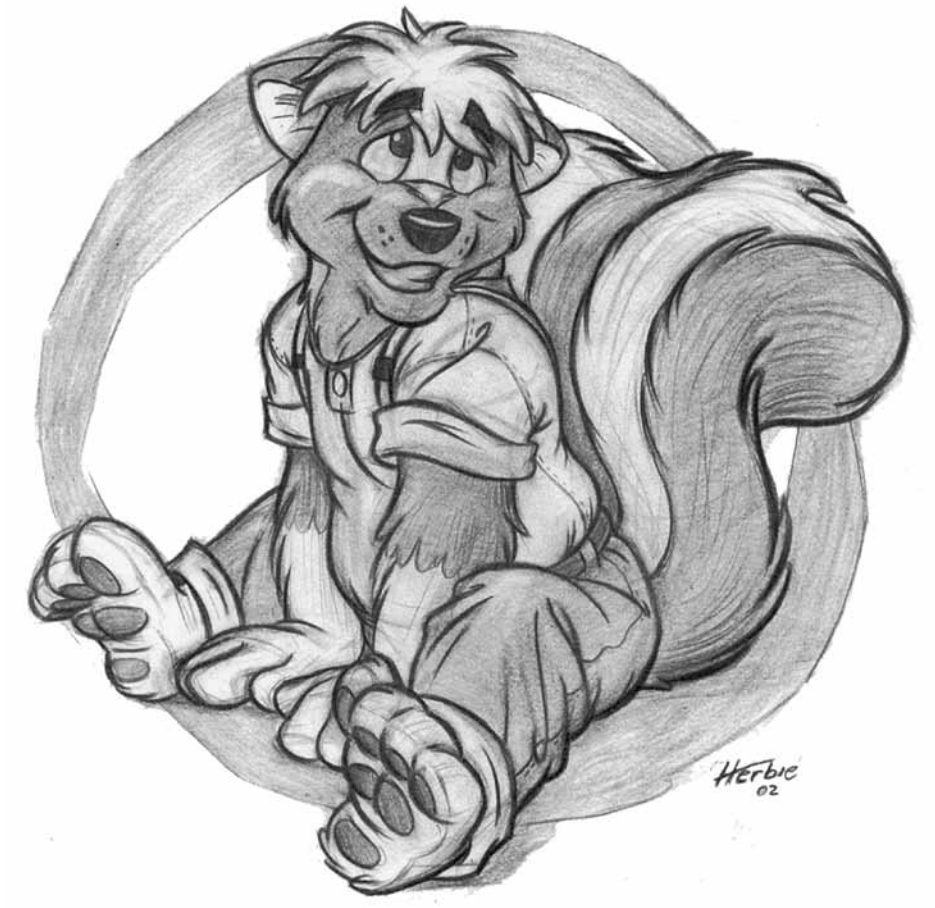

"Marty" by Herbie

takes life as it comes. He seems to love everyone and I think that is something alot of people lack. Ken seems to be fun. I just worry because I think one day he is going to run into someone and get hurt badly. I am sure there are people out there who wouldn't mind forcing themselves on him. So I hope he is careful.

Arthur is kinda hard to describe but he seems almost down about something. It could be because of Paulie, but I think there is something more then that. I really liked how Marty's family were played in the comic. His parents seem pretty cool, but I wonder how Marty's siblings will take it. Anyway you guys keep up the good work. I look forward to seeing more Circles around.

Take care!
Brian Aka Gragor the Dragon

Nice analysis of the characters, Brian. I hope this issue gave you more food for thought on our boys, and I hope you enjoy this issue as well.

NEXT ISSUE

It's December, 2001! The holidays descend on Kinsey Circle, and our boys are dealing with important issues like love, sex, responsibility, jealousy, hatred, charity, and making sure one has the most fabulous display of lights in the neighborhood! Has Ken lured Marty to his gym just to embarrass him? What special favor does Douglas ask of Arthur? And what role does Gus, the lesbian boxing wolf, play in the drama? Questions are answered and answers are questioned in *Circles* Issue 4: "In His Anger and His Shame."

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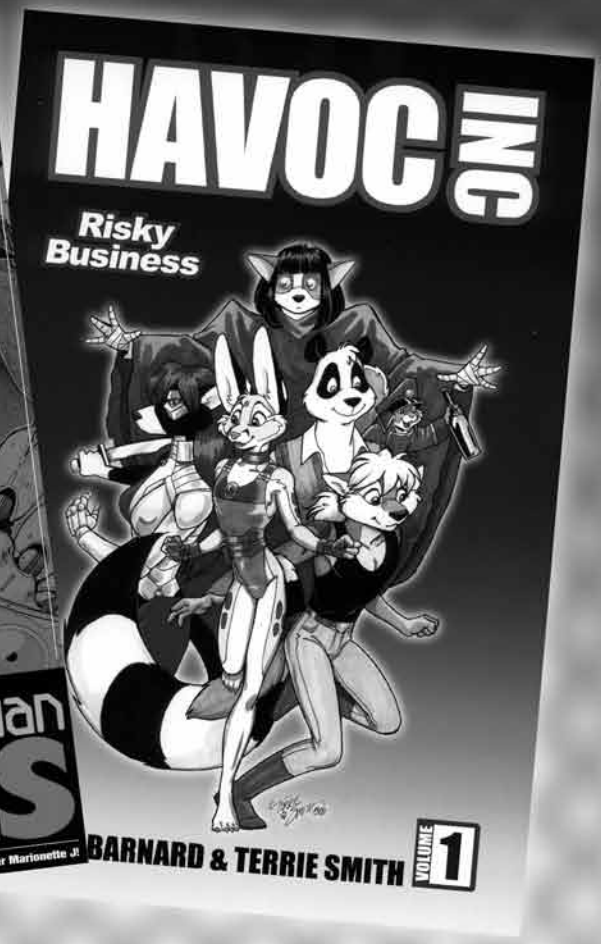

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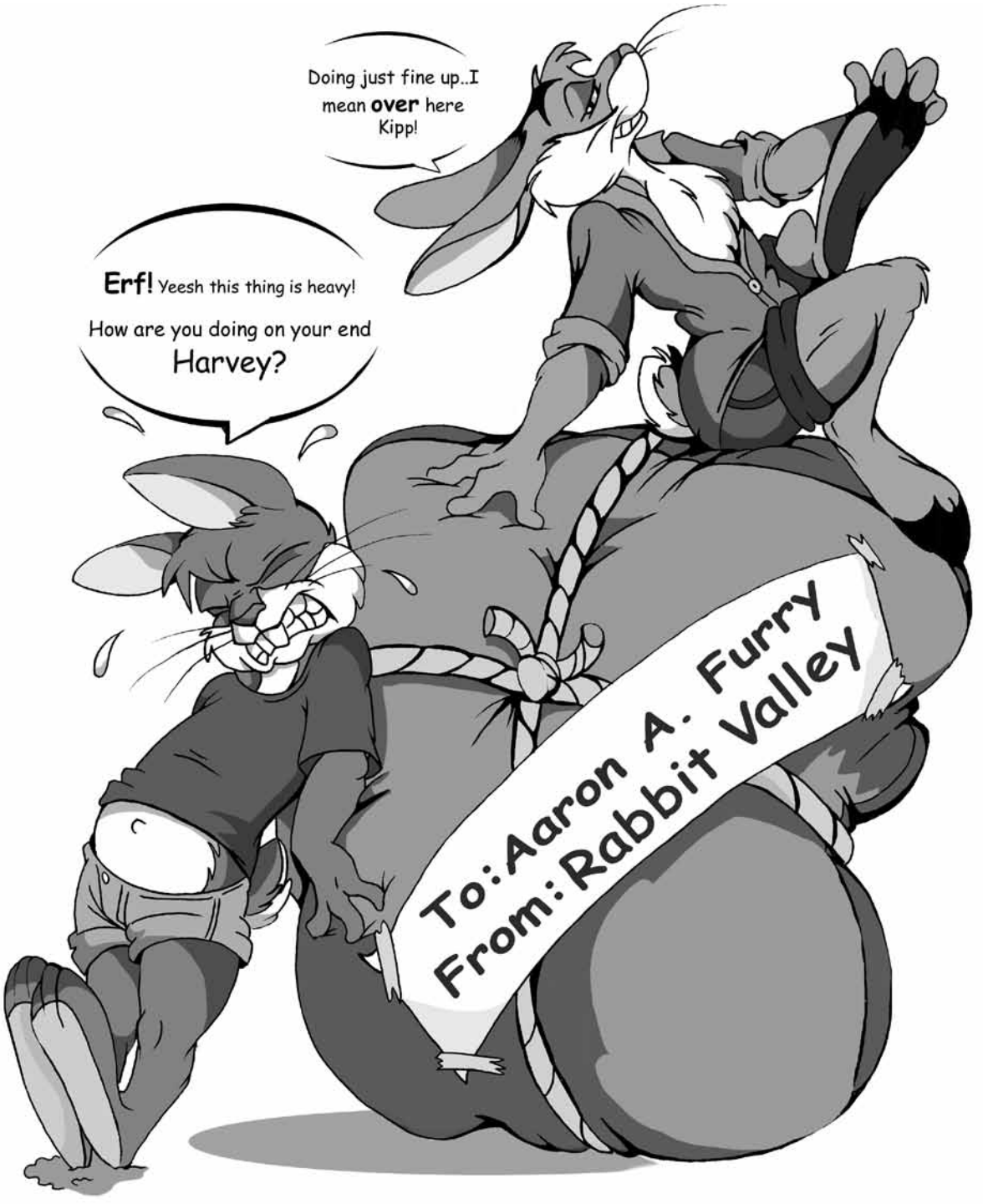
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